

300-Rise of an Empire By Lorraine Viade, PsyD



For those of you who are fans of the original 300 movie that told the mythical tale of 300 Spartans who died defending their homes and families, this movie offers some answers to questions that were left over from the original. Just how did the demi-god Xerxes become a god? How did the whole thing begin and what happened after the 300 died. Herein are the bloody answers if you have a stomach for the gut spilling action involved with these battles on land and sea. These movies are not for young children and after a while one does become a bit desensitized to the repetitive hacking away at limbs, but I wanted to see if the second part of Frank Miller's gothic novel series would be as over the top as the first. It is, but lacks the viral presence of Gerard Butler, the driving force in the first movie.

In this phase of the epic story, we see a warrior born of hate and revenge. Eva Green gives us a fierce and fearless woman who was tortured as a child, raped and held captive only to exact revenge over time and through cunning calculation. You root for her because of what she went through, but you see the result of long standing trauma over time—it turned her heart to stone. Xerxes on the other hand started out as just the son of a fallen king who was out for vengeance from the man who killed his father. The two villains have different motives for their actions, but each is out for blood—and lots of it.

These are the sort of movies people either love or hate. The first movie was superior in that the Spartan soldiers were more formidable and the images seemed new and innovative. While this movie was filmed in the same style, it suffers from a lack of connection until King Leonida's widow reminds us of how great a loss the original 300 were. There seems to be a desire by Hollywood filmmakers to reconnect with the old mythical stories these days. In terms of computer generated graphics and special

effects, we have come a very long way from the days of Ray Harryhausen. Greek and Roman tales of gods and goddesses were very popular when I was growing up. Those fantasy movies left a lot more to the imagination in terms of violent content. Stylized violence seems to be very common and popular these days. If you are a fan of the genre and enjoyed the first battle, then this is a good matinee for you.

300-Rise of an Empire is still showing in many of the “bargain” movie houses which are just the place to escape the heat on your RDO. I give it 3 shields.

